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Davies, Moya Llewelyn

What the working people want

London

[1912]

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WHAT THE WORKING PEOPLE WANT.

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THE CURE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT.

"Seems to me, mate, wot's put you out of a job 'as put me out."

"Ay, matey, I be thinkin' that's right: we must vote for the Taxation of Land Values."

IDLE LAND MEANS IDLE MEN.

WHAT THE WORKING PEOPLE WANT

THE CURE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

BY
MOYA LLEWELYN DAVIES

PRICE ONE PENNY

PUBLISHED BY THE UNITED COMMITTEE
FOR THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES
BROAD SANCTUARY CHAMBERS
11 TOTHILL ST., WESTMINSTER
LONDON, S.W.
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FEBRUARY, 1912

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WHAT THE WORKING PEOPLE WANT.

REASONS FOR UNREST.

WHAT is the matter with the working men of England? They are not satisfied. They are showing signs of discontent and unrest. And how can it be otherwise? They are hearing on the platform and seeing in the papers of the enormous wealth of England, of the 1,011 millions assessed last year to Income Tax, of the 118 millions by which our trade for 1910 exceeded that for 1909. They know that to some this enormous increase of wealth must be going, but they are not sharing in it. **Side by side with this picture of immense wealth is the picture of appalling poverty and destitution.** According to the *Evening Times* of January 11th: It was stated by the mother of an eight-months-old child, on whom an inquest was held at Westminster to-day, that the father of the child, named Trevor, living at Aylesford Street, Pimlico, was a porter employed in a hosier's shop in Oxford Street, and received 16s., with no tips or extras in any way. He worked from eight in the morning until eight at night, and had to spend 2s. a week for food while at work. Out of the remaining 14s. they had to pay 4s. rent, leaving 10s. to feed witness, the four children, and the father when he was at home. Before her husband got this job, she added between sobs, he was out of work for two years.

While the wages of the workers are remaining almost stationary, the cost of living is gradually increasing, rents are rising against them, rates and taxes tend steadily to grow. The value of their work increases, but they do not get the benefit. Their wages

are insufficient to provide them with proper homes, food, and clothing—to say nothing of laying by for sickness and old age, or giving their children a start in life with a good education. Some cannot get work at all, and those who are in work are daily in fear of losing their jobs. The constant presence of unemployed, ready to step into their shoes at little more than starvation wages, prevents the general level of wages from rising as it should.

For the workers in the country there is the difficulty of getting land to cultivate, or houses to live in at any price, and the high prices, or rents, and burdensome rates when a bit of land is obtained. The Small Holdings Act, which was intended to help the workers, has failed to break down the wall of land monopoly which bars the labourer from access to his native soil. Young men are unable to marry because they cannot get cottages, and many of the existing cottages would be closed as unfit for habitation but that the people have nowhere else to go. These are things which are a bitter knowledge to thousands of our people. **In the towns** also we have the people struggling under heavy rates, high rents, overcrowding, dear food, and low wages and unemployment — made worse by the stream of workers from the country, who, through their being unable, owing to the withholding of land, to get subsistence in their native villages, are driven to compete with their fellow workers in the towns, thus bringing down wages, sending up rents, making overcrowding worse, and aggravating the evils of unemployment.

Tax food, say the Tariff Reformers, and there will be work for all, and higher wages.

Tax Land Values, we say, and not by giving with one hand and taking away with the other, there will come to the people the employment, higher wages, and prosperity which are their due.

THE GREAT BUDGET.

The first step towards better things was taken by the passing into law of Mr. Lloyd George's Budget of 1909. That Budget provides for the **valuation of all land,** for finding out the value of the land itself, apart from the value of any buildings or other improvements which have been made in or upon the land. This valuation is proceeding, but not quickly enough. The Government

must be urged to hasten on the valuation, and to make it public, so that the real state of things may be disclosed, and steps taken to make land-owners bear their fair share of taxation, and to make land available on fair terms. The valuation must be brought up to date periodically, so that it may be made the basis for regular taxation for the breaking down of monopoly and the relief of industry. Why should we tax the work of the people, when there are huge values, created by the presence and industry of the people, going into the pockets of the land monopolists? These new taxes will be, not upon land, but upon the value of land—that value which the land has apart from the work done upon it.

HOW TO UNLOCK THE LAND.

Such taxation will unlock the land as no other method can. There was a piece of land lying idle recently in a village in Sussex; it was just under four acres in extent, and as long as it was unused it was contributing practically nothing to the rates, or, to be precise, the sum of 9*s.* 2*d.* a year, the annual value being reckoned at £2! All the time it was thus lying idle its value was growing with the growth of the village, and with the expenditure of the ratepayers of the village. And while this piece of land was contributing a mere nothing to the local rates, of course the industrious people who were making use of the land had to pay more to make up the deficiency; and the holding-up of this land, by reducing the available supply for cottages, etc., made the rent of such cottages dearer in consequence. Presently a purchaser came along who wanted that plot of land. What price was he asked to pay for that very piece, the rateable value of which was reckoned to be £2? £650, or 325 years' purchase! This is the way **landlords and land speculators escape their just burdens,** having one value for their land when asked to pay rates or taxes on it, and a totally different value when they want to let or sell it. The purchaser built a house on that plot — that is to say, he began to employ labour, to help industry, and to increase the wealth of the country. For giving work to the bricklayer, the carpenter, the plumber, the miner—to a whole series of trades—he was immediately punished. The rate collector very soon put in an appearance to take a toll from him for having performed all these beneficial services.

Land-owners must no longer be encouraged to withhold their land when there are men all round holding out hungry hands for it. **Tax the value of all land,** whether used or not, and land will begin to come into the market in a way yet undreamt of by those who are in need of it. The more there is in the market of anything the cheaper it is. Land is dear now because under the present rating system land-owners are encouraged to keep it unused, or only half used, thus depriving the workers of the means of earning their living. Land is "scarce," therefore it is dear. But the scarcity is only artificial. Land there is in plenty. Taxation according to the value of the land, whether used or not, will destroy the artificial scarcity—make it no longer worth the land-owner's while to withhold it. If he is taxed according to the value of the land he holds, he will be only too anxious to let or sell his land, and we shall have thousands of acres coming into use. **Idle land means idle men. Free the land, and thereby increase employment.** Then will dawn a day of hope for rural England—then will the land hunger of men begin to be satisfied.

BUILDINGS AND IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE RATE FREE.

But it is not enough to free the land and make it available for use on fair terms. **Men want not only land but also freedom from rates and taxes upon their work on the land.** They must not be hampered once they begin to cultivate the land by the fear of the rates going up at every improvement they make. No! They must know that they may go ahead, and get the best out of their land—that they may progress and prosper, and add to the wealth of the country, increasing production, reducing prices, and thus helping all those who buy what they produce, without for ever having the rate collector stepping in to say, "My man, you are getting on. You have made your holding more valuable; hand out a portion of what you have earned by your labour."

And this is where the rating of land values will help the workers. The proposal to rate land values is not, as many would like you to believe, a proposal to lay any new burden on the agricultural

districts, or upon the industry of agriculture. It is simply a proposal to lighten the burden of the already existing rates upon agricultural industry. The rates, instead of being levied on land, and buildings, and improvements, as at present, would be levied on land value alone. The value of buildings and improvements would be left out of account altogether; they would not be assessed to the local rates at all. The new rates would not put a fresh burden on the workers, nor on those who are making good use of the land; but only on those who hold land without allowing it to be put to its best use. **The man who makes good use of his land would pay less in rates than he does now.** The man who does not fully use his land, and who has been backward in making improvements, might have to pay more than he does now; and the "bad landlord" who keeps his land idle, and escapes under the present system, would for the first time have to pay his full share, according to the value of his land, thus lessening the amount left to be paid by others.

HOW TO RELIEVE THE RURAL DISTRICTS.

Further, this new taxation will bring special relief to rural districts. Rural districts have now to pay **too large a share of the cost of Education, and of Poor Relief, and of Main Roads, and of the Police.** The nation as a whole requires these services to be kept up, and they should be paid for by the nation as a whole. **To pay for these services, a levy should be made on the land values of the whole kingdom.** The huge land values of the towns and cities should be brought under contribution side by side with the much smaller land values of the suburbs and the country districts, and that total fund realised should be distributed among the rating areas according to their needs. No measure of relief to rural districts would be so simple or so effective as levying a national tax on land values, and applying it in relief of the local rates.

A PRACTICAL PROGRAMME.

How is this reform of taxation to be carried out? A practical programme already exists in the Memorial signed by 176 Members of Parliament which was favourably received by the

Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer on May 18th, 1911, a copy of which will be found on page 9.

The Memorial asked that local authorities should be empowered to levy rates on land values, and that a Budget tax should be levied on all land values, to be applied in providing a national fund in relief of rates, and in substitution of the duties on tea, cocoa, sugar, and other articles of food.

What will be the effects of this reform?

Land-owners will at last be made to bear their fair share of taxation. Land which is now unused will be brought into use, and the **supply of available land will be increased.** All those who want land for small holdings, for allotments, and for cottages, will be able to get it on terms which for the first time will give them a fair chance, and allow them to reap the fruits of their work and expenditure.

And by levying this tax on the monopolisers of the land, who did not make the land, nor cause its value, and who in many cases do not allow full use to be made of the land, a fund will be created which will **reduce the rates, and enable the present heavy taxes on tea, sugar, cocoa, and other articles of food to be taken off**—taxes which are at present so heavy a burden on the poor.

Relief will come to all workers: to workers in towns—in factories and workshops; to workers in the country—those who work on the land, the small holder, and the agricultural labourer; and the relief will be just, because it **will enable those who have sowed to reap, those who have toiled to get their just reward.** Genuine Taxation Reform—the taxation of land values—will do this, and not the juggle called Tariff Reform, which would only make the poor poorer by increasing the cost of the necessaries of life, diminishing employment and lowering wages. Freedom and justice, not so-called "protection," is what the working men of England want.

LAND AND TAXATION REFORM MEMORIAL

PRESENTED TO THE

PRIME MINISTER AND THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER ON THE 18th MAY, 1911.

We, the following Members of Parliament, desire to place on record our grateful appreciation of the efforts of the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the other Members of the Cabinet, in placing upon the Statute Book of the Country the Budget of 1909-10, which for the first time recognises the principle of the separate valuation of land, and thus provides the foundation necessary for such further reforms as will result in securing for the people of this country a more equitable distribution of the burdens of the State, in securing to each the results of his own labour, and in opening up the land to those who can make the best use of it.

We therefore respectfully urge the Government to continue and develop the policy inaugurated by the Budget by

(1) Making Land Values available for public needs;
(2) Freeing industry from monopoly and undue burdens of taxation;
(3) Completing the policy of Free Trade by
  (a) Securing greater opportunities to produce in our own country by affording greater opportunities to use the land; and
  (b) Abolishing the duties that remain on the food of the people.

We ask that this policy may be carried into effect by

(1) Hastening the completion of the Valuation of all Land, apart from improvements, provided for in the Budget of 1909-10;
(2) Making that Valuation accessible to the public;
(3) Empowering Local Authorities to levy rates on the basis of that Valuation;
(4) Levying a Budget Tax on all Land Values, to be applied
  (a) In providing a national fund to be allocated toward the cost of such services as Education, Poor Relief, Main Roads, Asylums, and Police, thereby reducing the local rates; and
  (b) In substitution of the duties on Tea, Sugar, Cocoa, and other articles of food.

Rt. Hon. William Abraham (Mabon).
Wm. Adamson.
Dr. Christopher Addison.
Percy Alden.
A. A. Allen.
A. M. Anderson, K.C.
J. Allen Baker.
Sir Godfrey Baring, Bt.
George N. Barnes.
A. W. Barton
W. P. Beale, K.C.
G. J. Bentham.
Arthur W. Black.
F. H. Booth.
C. W. Bowerman
William Brace.
Sir John Brigg.
J. F. L. Brunner.
Rt. Hon. Thomas Burt.
Noel Buxton.
Sir W. P. Byles.
Robt. Cameron.
H. G. Chancellor.
*Dr. W. A. Chapple.
J. R. Clynes.
Godfrey P. Collins.
Stephen Collins.
Sir Edwin Cornwall.
H. J. Craig.
E. Crawshay-Williams.
W. Crooks.
Sir Henry Dalziel.
Ellis W. Davies.
Sir W. Howell Davies.

Land and Taxation Reform Memorial.

Timothy Davies.
J. A. Dawes.
W. H. Dickinson.
C Duncan.
J. Hastings Duncan.
A. Clement Edwards.
Enoch Edwards.
J. Hugh Edwards.
Harold Elverston.
Geo B. Esslemont.
Charles Fenwick.
Thos. R. Ferens.
Hon. Eustace Fiennes.
G. A. France.
Stephen Furness.
Sir James P. Gibson, Bt.
A. H. Gill.
H. J. Glanville.
W. S. Glyn-Jones.
Sir Daniel F. Goddard.
F. W. Goldstone.
* G. G. Greenwood.
Hamar Greenwood.
F. Hall.
Jno. George Hancock.
Robert V Harcourt.
*J. Keir Hardie.
A. G. C. Harvey.
T. Edmund Harvey.
W. E. Harvey.
George Harwood.
James Haslam.
Evan Hayward.
Arthur Henderson.
John S. Higham.
John Hindes.
John Hodge.
J. D. Hope.
Rev. C. Silvester Horne
Walter Hudson.
Spencer Leigh Hughes.
Sir John Jardine.
Edw. T. John.
Wm. Johnson.
Edgar Jones.
H. Haydn Jones.
William Jones.
*F. W. Jowett.
F. Kellaway.
Joseph King.
R. C. Lambert.
G. Lansbury.
Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Bt.
Charles Leach.
*John W. Logan.
Sir Frederick Low, K.C.
John M. McCallum.
Donald Maclean.
J. A. Murray Macdonald.
Francis McLaren.
*Walter S. B. McLaren.
H. Manfield.
Arthur H. Marshall.
Hon. Joseph Martin.
D. M. Mason.
J. Duncan Millar.
Sir Alfred Mond, Bt.
*G. Hay Morgan.
Philip Morrell.
Robert Munro, K.C.
C. T. Needham.
Francis Neilson.
Harry Nuttall.
Fred Ogden.
James O'Grady.
J. Parker.
E. H. Pickersgill.
D. V. Pirie
J. Pointer.
Sir George H. Pollard.
A. A. W. H. Ponsonby.
Chas. E. Price.
Sir W. E. B. Priestley.
W. M. R. Pringle.
P. Wilson Raffan.
A. Roland Rainy.
A. Rendall.
Thomas Richards.
Albion H. Richardson.
Thos. Richardson.
Geo. H. Roberts.
J. M. Robertson.
Sidney Robinson.
Arnold Rowntree.
Jonathan Samuel.
*A. MacCallum Scott.
*Arthur Sherwell.
Edward Shortt.
Albert Smith.
H. B. Lees Smith.
Philip Snowden.
Sir Albert Spicer, Bt.
A. Stanley.
E. A. Strauss.
J. W. Summers.
J. E. Sutherland
J. E. Sutton.
John W. Taylor.
Theo. C Taylor
J. H. Thomas.
George R. Thorne.
Will Thorne.
Geo. Toulmin.
Sir Harry C. W Verney, Bt.
John Wadsworth.
S. Walsh.
Sir Joseph Walton, Bt.
John Ward.
Geo. J. Wardle.
Henry A. Watt.
Henry Webb.
Josiah C. Wedgwood.
Sir George White.
Sir Luke White.
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A. F. Whyte.
T. Wiles.
Alex. Wilkie.
John Williams.
Penry Williams.
W. Llewellyn Williams
Henry J. Wilson.
John Wilson.
W. Tyson Wilson.
R. Winfrey.
Wm. Young.
Sir J. H. Yoxall.

* The Members marked (*) have signed with certain reservations. Two Members have signed but do not wish their names to be published.

PLEASE NOTE.—If you are a supporter of the Taxation of Land Values and find that the name of your Member of Parliament is not on this list, it is your duty to know the reason. In presenting you with the facts of the case, we are doing our best for the reform and we appeal to you to help us.

All Members of Parliament not on this list should be written to on the subject by their constituents. We suggest that a letter or a petition signed by as many residents as possible in the constituency asking the Member of Parliament to add his name to the Memorial should be taken in hand without delay.

A Petition for the purpose will be sent to you on application to the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, 11, Tothill Street, Westminster, London, S.W.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTATION.

IMPORTANT MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS.

The Land and Taxation Reform Memorial was presented on the 18th May, 1911, by a deputation consisting of the following Members of Parliament: Mr. Charles E. Price, Sir Albert Spicer, Mr. P. Wilson Raffan, Mr. Josiah C. Wedgwood, Mr. Francis Neilson, and Mr. Philip Morrell. Mr. George Barnes, who was also to have accompanied the deputation, was unavoidably prevented from being present.

Mr. Price, who introduced the deputation, thanked the Prime Minister for the encouragement he gave them to press forward the Taxation of Land Values in the early days of the movement, from 1906 onwards, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Lloyd George for providing for the separate valuation of land in the Budget of 1909. The introduction of that Budget was, in his view, largely responsible for the great Liberal victory in 1910. He urged the necessity of expediting the valuation, and making it available to the public and the local authorities.

Mr. Raffan urged that local authorities should be empowered to levy rates upon land values within their respective areas, and thus to free buildings and improvements. He contended that the present system of rating formed a serious and ever-increasing burden upon industry and enterprise. He mentioned that the land values group in the House of Commons were preparing a Bill dealing with this subject, and asked that facilities should be given for its passage through the House of Commons.

Mr. Wedgwood dealt with the portion of the memorial which asked that a Budget tax should be placed on all land values to be applied in providing a national fund towards the cost of services largely national in their character, such as education, poor relief, main roads, asylums, and police.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the course of a sympathetic reply, stated that he was fully alive to the urgency and importance of the problem. It was obviously one of the matters which required to be considered in connection with the readjustment of local and imperial finance, and had been receiving his careful attention. He had now appointed a special committee to report on the question of this readjustment, and the matter was, to some extent, out of his hands until the report of the committee had been presented. He therefore suggested that the deputation should lay their views fully before the committee, who were authorised to receive evidence on the subject, and they could rest assured that the points mentioned in the memorial would thus receive full and careful consideration.

In reply to a question, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said it was expected that the valuation would be completed within five years from the date of the passing of the Budget of 1909.

THE PRIME MINISTER.

The Prime Minister expressed his full concurrence with the views expressed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and mentioned that twenty years ago, before this question had attracted any large share of attention in the House of Commons, he was associated with Lord Haldane, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Sidney Buxton, Mr. Arthur Acland, and others in a movement to secure for local authorities part of the value of land which was due to the enterprise, expenditure, and energy of the community. Great progress had been made since then, and not only had public sentiment ripened, but substantial steps had been taken in the direction of the reforms advocated by the deputation. The first of these steps was the valuation of land, provided for in the Budget; the second was the Budget tax on undeveloped land; and the third was the appointment of the committee which was to report upon the relationship between local and imperial finance. He regarded the question as of great importance, both in its urban and in its rural aspects, although, in his opinion, the rural aspect was more urgent at the present time.

LAND AND TAXATION REFORM MEMORIAL.

THE SOCIAL AND FINANCIAL EFFECTS OF THE POLICY.

It is claimed by the Advocates of the Taxation of Land Values that the advantages of this Reform will be—

(1) To take the burden of rates off dwelling-houses, factories, mills, workshops, plant and machinery, mining works, shops, warehouses, offices, and all industrial and business premises, and all farm buildings, drainage, fencing, and other agricultural improvements;

(2) To break down the barriers which land monopoly now opposes to municipal, industrial, and agricultural development and enterprise, and thus to cause the land everywhere to be used in ways more advantageous to the workers;

(3) To make it possible for more, better, and cheaper dwellings to be provided in towns and villages, to make small holdings and allotments obtainable on fair terms, and generally to free industry of all kinds—agricultural, mining, forestry, building, manufacturing, engineering, public works, transport, distribution—from burdens and restrictions, and extend the field for the remunerative employment of labour and capital in town, suburb, and country;

(4) To secure for the agricultural industry a genuine measure of relief;

(5) To make national services a national burden, and thus give effective relief to rural districts from the excessive burden of rates which now falls on them in providing for what are largely national requirements;

(6) To cheapen the cost of living for the mass of the people, and take away the only plausible argument for tariff-mongering and the pretence that protective taxes can be imposed which will not increase the cost of living.

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LEAFLETS ON THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES

LAND VALUES TAXATION. How it will help the Cottager and Small Holder (No. 7).
WHY THE SHOPKEEPERS SHOULD SUPPORT THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES (No. 17).
WHY DO WE TAX HOUSES? (No. 23).
THE BREAKFAST-TABLE DUTIES AND FOOD TAXES (No. 26).
WHY THE RATES ARE HEAVY IN LONDON (No. 33).
HOW TO UNLOCK THE LAND. A Word to the Labourer and Small Holder (No. 35).
CONSERVATIVES APPROVE THE RATING OF LAND VALUES (No. 37).
A TAX ON LAND VALUES IS NOT A TAX ON LAND BUT ON THE VALUE OF LAND (No. 38).
HOLDING AND WITHHOLDING (No. 49).
WHY WORK IS SCARCE AND HOW TO MEND MATTERS (No. 50).
THE LAND AND TAXATION REFORM MEMORIAL. Signed by 173 Members of Parliament (No. 58).
WHY THE LANDOWNER CANNOT SHIFT THE TAX ON LAND VALUES (No. 59).
THE REWARD OF MONOPOLY AND THE WAGES OF LABOUR—an illustration from the "Lusitania" (No. 60).
THE LAND SONG (No. 61).
HOW TO RAISE WAGES WITHOUT STRIKES (No. 62).
TO ALL EMPLOYED IN THE BUILDING TRADE (No. 63).
THE A B C OF LAND VALUES TAXATION FOR THE AGRICULTURAL LABOURER. Free Trade and the Land Question; Richard Cobden on Land Values *on reverse side* (No. 64).
SOME REASONS WHY ENGINEERS SHOULD SUPPORT THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES (No. 65).
PEASANT PROPRIETORS AND TARIFF REFORM. Why Agricultural Labourers have been driven to the Towns *on reverse side* (No. 66).
FOR THE COMMUNITY ITS OWN; FOR THE WORKER HIS OWN. Tax Land Values and End Unjust Rating *on reverse side* (No. 67).
THE LANDLORDS THREW OFF THEIR TAXES (with diagram). Richard Cobden's Explanation of the Diagram *on reverse side* (No. 68).

Read **"LAND VALUES,"** *the Journal of the Movement for the Taxation of Land Values. Price* **1d.** *monthly (by post, 1s. 6d. per annum).*

A COMPLETE SET OF THE ABOVE LEAFLETS, with a Specimen Copy of "LAND VALUES," will be sent gratis to anyone making application to the

UNITED COMMITTEE FOR THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES,
11, Tothill Street, Westminster, London, S.W.

Telegrams: "Eulav, London. *Telephone: Gerrard 8323 (2 lines).*

TAXATION OF LAND VALUES MEANS ACCESS TO LAND ON FAIR TERMS.

(REPRODUCED BY SPECIAL PERMISSION OF THE "DAILY NEWS.")

At a meeting of the Surrey County Council (held on 9th May, 1911) it was reported that the Earl of Dysart asked £200 an acre for land for small holdings, which was paying rates on the basis of only £1 an acre annual value. The Council resolved that in preparing the new basis for the county rate special regard should be had to the marked discrepancy between valuations for sale and for assessment.

MSH 20908

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TITLE